

## **1. Innovative and Distinctive Education Program**

The school shall provide a brief description of some of its unique, innovative, and significant contributions to public education within the same grade level and geographic area in which it is located. These contributions may include:

1. Teaching methods
2. Measures of student achievement
3. Professional development for teachers
4. Learning programs, or
5. Encouraging parental or community involvement



# Rams Conquer Mountains!

## College and Career Ready

*Leveraging higher engagement of students to build the essential skills for career pathways and college readiness.*

## High Classroom Engagement

*Building student engagement for effective communication techniques and student centered learning.*

## Lesson Planning

*Relate lesson plans to real world application.*

## Relationship Building

*Start with building a strong relationship between teachers and students, then use that as a foundation to make other connections.*

***School response:***

Las Montañas Charter High School (LMCHS) was awarded the unique opportunity to be a part of New Mexico's first High School Redesign Network (HSRN) and work in close collaboration with NMPED (Priority School's Bureau), John's Hopkins University, Stanford University, and 7 other high schools across the state of New Mexico as collaborative thought partners. LMCHS was awarded \$100,000 for planning and preparation and \$100,000 for Year 1 implementation (SY 2019-2020) with an additional \$100,000 possible for Year 2 implementation. The NMPED approved HSRN Blueprint describes an innovative and distinctive education program that won't be found anywhere in the Las Cruces or surrounding communities.

Las Montañas has partnered with The Explore Academy and has adopted the model of 8 term classes per year with "flavors" that offer students a choice in their education while connecting curriculum to New Mexico Common Core State Standards (NMCCSS) and real world examples. LMCHS has revised aspects of The Explore Academy model to fit the unique population and needs of students at LMCHS.

The NMPED approved HSRN Blueprint addresses 4 main drivers:

1. **Teaching and Learning:** In addition to ensuring teaching and learning are aligned with standards that promote access to post-secondary education or training, what practices will accelerate the academic growth of students who enter with lower levels of pre-High School preparation and motivation?
    - a. Build strong relationships between teacher and student
    - b. Student centered learning
    - c. Making connections between classroom learning and real-world connections
  2. **Students at the Center:** What specific approaches will be put in place to build relationships between students and adults, while cultivating a school culture of agency, optimism, and achievement?
    - a. Student Learning Community (SLC) addressing essential skills, progress monitoring, and career skills
    - b. Early Warnings System (EWS)
  3. **Organizing Adults:** How will we enhance the collective efficacy of the adults in the building?
    - a. Have common PLC time daily
    - b. Teacher/student mentor time
  4. **Post-Secondary Pathways:** What approaches to post-secondary success are most relevant to local students and community, as well as supportive to regional economic development?
    - a. Career/college pathway for all students
- **Graphics and the final NMPED approved HSRN Blueprint are available as Appendix A for specific details and further review.**

## 2. Academic Performance

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school... failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's standards of excellence or student performance standards identified in the charter contract.

### a. Department's Standards of Excellence

**For any school that has not maintained a C or better letter grade in SY2016 – SY2018** provide a narrative that describes the improvement actions targeted to improve the school's letter grade (school/adult/leader/teacher actions) and the success of those actions (student academic successes/improved outcomes).

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through documented evidence at the site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/teacher actions and the student academic successes/improved outcomes in the narrative.**

The narrative should reference performance data that can be reviewed and verified either during the site visit or during the "desk audit" review of the application. If providing data, please attach in an appendix and reference the appendix by name in the narrative.

**Schools that have maintained a C or better letter grade in SY2016 – SY 2018 over the term of the contract AND have not received a D or F in any indicator of the letter grade during SY2016 – SY2018 do NOT complete this Section.**

**NOTE: The SY2019 School Accountability Report will be considered by the Public Education Commission at renewal. A school may provide a narrative response to its School Accountability Report.**

***School response:***

In the first two years of the contract, Las Montañas's letter grade was a F, at the end of the second year of the contract and entering the third year of the contract the school identified a core team and worked to develop 90 day plans through the New Mexico DASH Plan. The core team carefully went through the NM DASH process which included data analysis and goals, focus areas, and conducting a root cause analysis. Some of the specific actions taken to improve academic performance are described below:

*All teachers plan and deliver instruction aligned to CCSS as evidenced by unit plans, formative assessments, PLC's and classroom walkthroughs:*

- Professional Development (PD) addressing intra-departmental standards alignment and beginning of year assessments.
- PD for unit plan alignment based on Domain 1 of the NMTEACH Rubric.
- Math department review of unit plans to ensure alignment with New Mexico Common Core State Standards (NMCCSS).
- Teacher developed common formative assessments which included a vocabulary and performance task component.
- Math department identified students who are on target with grade level NMCCSS standards to create a remediation and acceleration plan.
- Math department evaluated the pacing guide to ensure completion of quarter 1 and 2 standards.
- English department established and implemented common evidence based strategies to target NMCCSS.
- English department identified current students using multiple data points to place in student intervention courses. Teachers implemented Tier 1 strategies as intervention.
- English department reviewed unit plans to ensure alignment with Domain 1 indicators from the NMTEACH rubric.
- English Department used quarterly CFA's and analyze data to inform future instruction.

*Teachers will participate in structured PLC's with a focus on improving student learning/achievement:*

- PD focused on collaboration, teamwork, and mutual accountability.
- Team building activities to achieve community networking and collaboration.
- Math PLC created a yearly calendar with PLC dates and times. PLC time will be used to align all unit plans and assessments.
- Math department collaborated in developing an intervention and acceleration plan along with the Reading intervention.
- Math department set a pacing guide for collaboration with instructional coaches to evaluate at-risk and accelerated student progress.
- English department reviewed unit plans to ensure alignment with NMTEACH Domain 1 indicators.

- English department created a yearly PLC calendar and participated in PARCC/ELA strategy related PD.
- English department collaborated with instructional coaches to evaluate student progress, especially at-risk students.

*Teachers will analyze student performance data and student classroom performance to determine areas for re-teaching and interventions.*

- PD focused on previous years PARCC and NWEA MAP data.
- Attendance data presented in regards to the Attendance Success Initiative (ASI) Program.
- Initiated contact with NWEA regarding data-driven instruction PD.
- PD with analysis of previous years school grade data.
- Math department reviewed and analyzed PARCC, MAP, and Common Formative Assessment data.
- Math department gathered and analyzed data for at-risk student and accelerated students.
- Math department monitored progress data of at-risk students for possible Tier 2 intervention or SAT referral.
- English department identified current students using multiple data points to place student in intervention courses and implemented Tier 1 strategies as intervention.
- English department developed common formative assessments and analyzed data to inform decisions about future instructional plans.
- English department monitored the progress data of at-risk students for Tier 2 intervention or SAT referral.

These specific actions, among other factors lead to the school improving to a letter grade of C in the third year (2018) of the contract.

Points received in the Final Grade:

- 2016: 31.87 F
- 2017: 29.91 F
- 2018: 56.70 C

More data related to the academic achievement and student growth per the NMPED 2018 School Grade Report Card:

- Is the school as a whole making academic progress?
  - Reading Growth +1.13: *Higher Than Expected*
  - Mathematics Growth +1.12: *Higher Than Expected*
- How much progress are high-performing students making?
  - Reading +0.96: *Higher Than Expected*
  - Mathematics +0.42: *Higher Than Expected*
- How much improvement are low-performing students making?
  - Reading +0.49: *Higher Than Expected*

- Mathematics +0.48: *Higher Than Expected*
- The school received in “A” in the Opportunity to Learn category measuring if students and families believe the school is a good place to attend and learn (7.39 out of a possible 8 points).
- How many students are graduating?
  - Four-Year Graduation Rate: 32%
  - Five-Year Graduation Rate: 33%
  - Six-Year Graduation Rate: 49%
    - The school is aware of the lower than expected graduation rates and is working on specific strategies to address the following leading indicators through the High School Redesign Network Blueprint.
      - Student Attendance and school average daily attendance
      - Attendance by instructional staff and staff average daily attendance
      - Interim assessment data
      - Student course completion data
      - Instructional staff turnover rate
      - NMTEACH information
      - Out-of-school suspension rates and average out-of-school suspension rates by total school and broken down by sub-group
      - Chronic absenteeism rates
      - Dropout rates
      - Number of students completing college pathways or dual enrollment classes

**Note: The specific strategies addressing these and other indicators can be found in the graphics and the final NMPED approved HSRN Blueprint available as Appendix A.**

## b. School Specific Charter Goals

Pursuant to NMCA 22-8B-9.1, each charter school authorizer must allow for the inclusion of additional rigorous, valid and reliable indicators proposed by a charter school in each school's performance framework to augment external evaluations of its performance, provided that the chartering authority approves the quality and rigor of the indicators and the indicators are consistent with the purposes of the Charter Schools Act.

**All applicants must report on each school specific charter goal that is included in the school's performance framework.** Applicants must provide a summary analysis of their performance on each goal in over the term of the contract. This analysis must state, for each year of the contract, whether the goal was met and must include longitudinal data that can show the progress of the school over the contract term. For each goal, the applicant should provide a visual representation of the longitudinal data.

**For any applicant that did not meet all of their goals in each year of the contract term, provide a narrative that addresses the improvement actions (school/adult/leader/teacher actions) targeted to improve the school's performance on that school specific goal and the success of those actions (student academic successes/improved outcomes).** The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining sufficient performance on the school specific goal. The narrative should only address a goal that was not met in each year of the contract term.

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through documented evidence at the site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/teacher actions and the student academic successes/improved outcomes in the narrative.**

The narrative should reference performance data that can be reviewed and verified either during the site visit or during the "desk audit" review of the application. If providing data, please attach in an appendix and reference the appendix by name in the narrative.

**Schools that have met all of their school specific goals in each year of the contract term do NOT provide a narrative.**



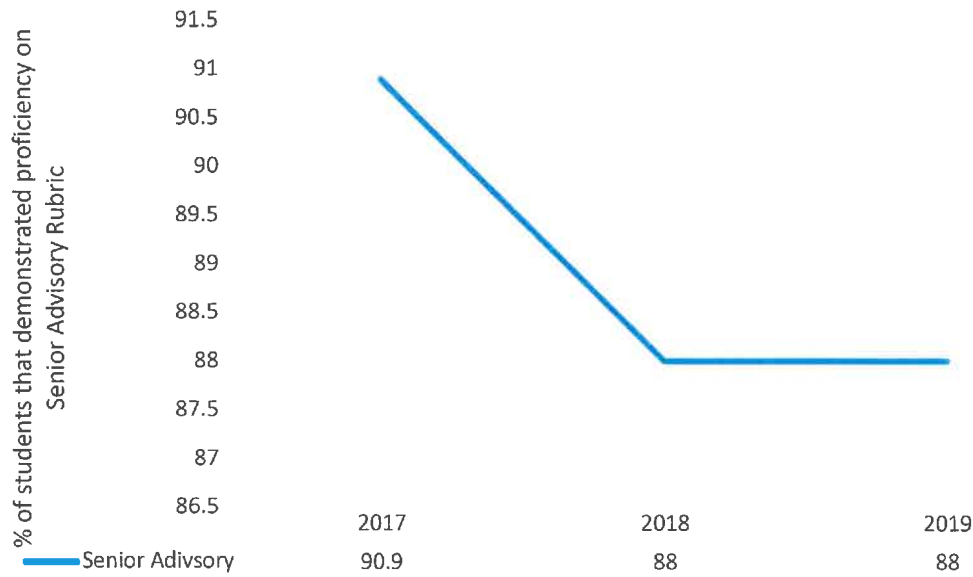
**School response:**

Performance Indicator # 1 and #2



NWEA MAP Assessment was given to Full Academic Year Students. Students in Math “met standard” for the past three years. Students in Reading “met standard” in 2018 and were only two students away for meeting standard the other two years. Interventions and supports are still in place for all students in Math and Reading.

### Performance Indicator #3



The senior advisory rubric is a 100 point scale designed to provide students with a variety of events and activities that lead to college and career readiness. Data indicates that full academic year seniors have a high success rate completing the rubric in the “meets standard” or “exceeds standard” category. The evidence of the senior advisory rubric includes individual student note-books that include event sign-in sheets, college fair tickets, ACT tickets, FAFSA documentation, progress monitoring charts, attendance data, etc.

### **3. Financial Compliance**

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school...failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

#### **a. Audit Report Summary**

Every charter school is subject to the Audit Act. NMSA22-8B-4(C). The Public School Finance Act requires the audit committee of each charter school governing body to track and report progress on the status of the most recent audit findings and advise the local school board on policy changes needed to address audit findings (see next page).

Please edit the actual year you are referring to in the table. For example, Year 1 should be changed to the audited year (such as FY16) within the current contract. Also, provide a summary of the nature of findings including category levels. Include and indicate any repeat audit findings involving a material weakness or significant deficiency.

Year	Total # of Findings	Nature of Findings including Rating (Compliance, Significant Deficiency, Material Weakness)	School's Corrective Action Plan
FY16	0	N/A	Administration continues to train and monitor policies and procedures.
FY17	0	N/A	Administration continues to train and monitor policies and procedures.
FY18	5	001-Timely Cash Receipts-Non-compliance	<p><b>2018-001 Untimely Cash Receipts (Other Noncompliance)</b>  <b>Condition/Context:</b> During our review of 19 cash receipts, we noted 1 cash receipt in the amount of \$19,905 that was not deposited within 24 hours of receipt. The receipt packet did not include a cash receipt slip as the check was initially mailed to the Business Manager's office and subsequently returned to the School to be deposited at the local bank branch location.</p> <p><b>Management's Response:</b> Management has reviewed and discussed that timely deposits</p>



		<p>005-Financial Close &amp; Reporting-Material</p>	<p>expenditures exceeded the legal level of budgetary control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund 24101 Title I IASA, Operation of Non-instructional Services - \$1,633</li> </ul> <p><b>Management's Response:</b> Management has reviewed and discussed. They will review and implement procedures to ensure that the necessary adjustment will be completed in a timely manner, and will meet the state deadline for these adjustments.</p> <p><b>2018-005 Financial Close and Reporting (Material Weakness)</b></p> <p><b>Condition/Context:</b> During test-work of the financial close and reporting process, it was noted that the School has not implemented an effective financial close and reporting process for the year ended June 30, 2018. We identified unnatural account balances, and during testing over fund balance, it was identified that a material amount incorrectly closed to the accounts payable rather than fund balance. In addition, we identified a cash receipt related to FY18 that was incorrectly excluded from the accounts receivable accrual as of June 30, 2018, which required an audit adjustment. It was also identified that the School improperly included two FY19 cash receipts as part of the accounts receivable accrual. During review of the June 2018 bank reconciliation, we identified three ACH payments totaling \$61,163 which were improperly listed as a reconciling item, as the wires were not initiated during the fiscal year.</p> <p><b>Management's Response:</b> Management has reviewed and discussed. This issue was an ivee software rollover glitch. The programing vendor was contacted about the rollover glitch of fund balance hitting, accounts payable; reverse process was completed and re-run of rollover was done.</p>
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			New trial balances were processed and verification of cash balance, fund balance were verified. This will continue to be an area that management will have to keep a close watch on with technology now days, glitches occur.
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## b. Board of Finance

Pursuant to NMSA 22-8-38, failure of the governing body of a state-chartered charter school to qualify for designation as a board of finance constitutes good and just grounds for nonrenewal or revocation of its charter.

Further, pursuant to NMSA 22-8-39, the department may at any time suspend a local school board or governing body of a state-chartered charter school from acting as a board of finance if the department reasonably believes there is mismanagement, improper recording or improper reporting of public school funds under the local school board's or governing body of a state-chartered charter school's control.

When the governing body of a state-chartered charter school is suspended from acting as a board of finance, the department is required to consider commencing proceedings before the commission to revoke or refuse to renew the charter of the state-chartered charter school.

If the school's **Board of Finance was suspended** at any time during the term of the contract, the school must provide a narrative explaining the actions taken (**school/adult/leader/board actions**) on the school's own initiative to correct financial compliance and regain the Board of Finance Authority and the success of those actions (**improved practices and outcomes**).

The school must also describe the current status of the Board of Finance and continuing actions to ensure the same financial challenges do not reoccur. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice.

The narrative must be supported by evidence provided in an appendix and verifiable through evidence at the site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/board actions and the improved practices and outcomes in the narrative.**

**Schools that have maintained all Board of Finance authority during the entire term of the contract do NOT complete this Section.**

***N/A: The school's Board of Finance was never suspended during the entire term of the contract.***

***N/A***



#### 4. Contractual, Organizational, and Governance Responsibilities

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school...committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter...*and/or*...violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.

##### a. Charter Material Terms

Pursuant to NMSA 22-8B-9, each charter contract must contain material term of the charter application as determined by the parties to the contract. The PEC's contract identifies all material terms in Article VII., Section 8.01(a)(i)-(xvii) of the Performance Contract.

If a school received "working to meet" or "fall far below" in WEB EPPS, annual report, or during site visits of the current contract term, the school must describe the improvement actions the school made to address the deficiencies.

Schools that do not have any repeated "working to meet" ratings or any "falls far below" ratings on the WEB EPPS or site visit in the current year do NOT complete this Section.

*School response: N/A*

*The school did not have any repeated "working to meet" ratings or any "falls far below ratings regarding charter material terms.*

## **b. Organizational Performance Framework**

Pursuant to NMCA 22-8B-9.1, the performance framework for each charter school must include performance indicators and performance targets for governing body performance, including compliance with all applicable laws, rules and terms of the charter contract.

**For any school that has received a repeated “working to meet” rating or a first time or repeat “falls far below rating” for one or more of the organizational performance framework indicators on the most recently completed organizational performance framework evaluation provide a narrative explaining the improvement actions made (school/adult/leader/board actions) to meet all legal compliance requirements and the effectiveness of those actions (improved practices and outcomes) in improving organizational performance and compliance.**

The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining organizational performance and compliance.

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/board actions and the improved practices and outcomes in the narrative.**

**If the school has received any OCR complaints or formal special education complaints, the school must identify those, provide all communications (redacted to protect PII) related to those complaints in an appendix, and describe the current status of the complaint. If any of those complaints have been resolved and resulted in a finding that the school violated any law, the school must provide a narrative describing the required compensatory and corrective actions required and their status in implementing those actions. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the site visit.**

**Schools that do not have any repeated “working to meet” ratings or any “falls far below” ratings on the most recent organizational performance framework evaluation do NOT complete this Section.**

***School response:***

The school received a “falls far below” rating for item I-A.00-06 Operating Budget/Audits/Periodic Reports/Expenditures/Reimbursements/Audit Reviews/Meals.

- This rating is due to the audit findings detailed in the 2018 audit report. The improvement actions are detailed in the corrective action plan submitted by the school and expressed in section 3-A. of this application.

The school had a repeated “working to meet” rating for item III-A.04 Educational Plan: protecting the rights of English Language Learners (Title III).

- The school worked closely with the Language and Culture Bureau to address the ELP error report which triggered the “working to meet” rating. The communication with the bureau included guidance, and steps taken to identify and correct the concerns brought forth by the CSD site visit team. The school’s administration and ELL Coordinator also worked closely with Las Cruces Public Schools to research errors of students coming from that district. The school did upload to WEB EPSS the ELP error report that shows properly coded ELL students that were previously mis-coded.

The school did receive a repeat “working to meet” rating for item III-A.06 Educational Plan: meet their recurrent enrollment goals.

- The recurrent enrollment goal is currently 76% while the state goal to “meet standard” is 85%. The 76% is up from 63% in the prior year and 49% the year before that. The school is trending in the right direction and will continue to work to retain students. Furthermore, the school has increased its enrollment from 167 students (2018-2019) to 182 students (current enrollment).

The school did receive a repeat “working to meet” rating for item VII-A.00 and item VII-A.01 School Environment: complying with facilities requirements and complying with health and safety requirements.

- The school was rated as “working to meet standard” because we were out of compliance during the 2017-2018 academic year due to one of the drills being a lockdown drill rather than a fire drill. The school did correct the mistake for the 2018-2019 academic year which is evident by the emergency drills log. The school is also in compliance thus far in the 2019-2020 academic year which can be verified by emergency drill logs.
- The school’s safe schools plan was approved by NMPED June 20, 2017. All child abuse/neglect certificates recognizing and reporting child abuse are in the personnel files of all employees.

### c. Governance Responsibilities\*

Pursuant to NMSA 22-8B-4, each charter school must, at all times, have at least five members and no members may serve on any other charter school governing body. Further, the governing bodies must operate in accordance with their charter contract and bylaws. The PEC's performance contract requires that the PEC is notified of board vacancies within 30 days, and that vacancies are filled within 45 days.

Additionally, pursuant to NMSA 22-8-12.3, Boards must maintain audit and finance committees that meet statutory makeup requirements.

Further, pursuant to NMAC 6.80.4.20, each charter school governing body member must annually complete five hours of approved training.

Finally, governing body members are held to the conflict of interest requirements laid out in NMSA 22-8B-5.2.

**Each school must identify how they have met governance responsibilities during the term of the contract.** Specifically, the school must identify:

- the membership of their boards at all times during the term of the contract (with roles and service terms for all members) this should also include membership of the required committees;
- any time when membership on the governing body fell below the requirements in their by-laws or the statutory minimum of 5 members;
- any time when the governing body did not maintain the required committee membership;
- the amount of time any vacancies were open;
- any board members that did not complete required training hours in any of the years of the contract term.

**If the school identified any governance requirements they were unable to meet,** the school must provide a narrative describing the improvement actions the school implemented to move toward full compliance with governance responsibilities.

The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting all governance requirements.

The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the site visit.

**School response: Las Montanas Charter High School governance body complies with NMSA 22-8B-4, NMSA 22-8-12, NMAC 6.80.4.20 and NMSA 22-8B-5.2.**

**Board Members annually throughout the contract term**

<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
Nicole Fuchs	Michael Davis	Michael Davis	Michael Davis	Michael Davis
Kevin Freitas	Kevin Freitas	Kevin Freitas	Kevin Freitas	Kevin Freitas
Laura Carrion	Laura Carrion	Laura Carrion	Laura Carrion	Laura Carrion
Michael Davis	Blanca E. Martinez-Rolle	Blanca E. Martinez-Rolle	Blanca E. Martinez-Rolle	Blanca E. Martinez-Rolle
Blanca E. Martinez-Rolle	Patrick J. Switzer	Patrick J. Switzer	Patricia S. Gonzales	Patricia S. Gonzales

- The governing body membership has remained in compliance at all times during the term of the contract.
- There was no time the membership on the governing body fell below the requirements of the school’s bylaws or the statutory minimum of 5 members.
- There was no time the membership on the governing body did not maintain the required committee membership.
- During the time Patrick Switzer resigned from the governing body and Patricia Gonzales was accepted in the governing body, a time period of (GET INFO. FROM CLARA) passed.
- All governing body member completed at least the minimum required training hours during the duration of the contract term.

**\* All schools must provide a response for this section of the application.**